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Scott, Walter (1867-)

Reciprocity is Dead **The Liberals Say So**

**Opinions of Liberal Leaders and the
Liberal Press**

**Premier Scott declares that the Tariff
is not a legitimate Provincial Issue**

CANADA NO "ADJUNCT"

Reciprocity Is Dead The Liberals Say So

Reciprocity has no place in a provincial political campaign. This statement is made upon the authority of no less a person than Premier Scott. Reciprocity, dealing as it does with the tariff, is a purely federal issue and, as such, its discussion should be confined to the arena of federal politics. Whether the principle is sound, or unsound, whether the benefits resulting therefrom be certain or problematical, is a point to be decided upon by the Dominion Parliament, or by the great body of federal electors.

Premier Scott recognized this fact when, at Outlook in October, 1910, he spoke as follows:

If in our provincial affairs an attempt was made to use the customs tariff as an issue, what would be said?

The proposal to make the tariff an issue in provincial politics was, to Premier Scott, so out of the question that he did not attempt to combat the proposal by argument. In derision he said—what would be thought of a person who would attempt this? Nor does the question really admit of argument. The introduction of the tariff into a discussion of provincial issues is a subterfuge so transparent as to be manifest even to those who possess only an elementary knowledge of the spheres of provincial and federal action.

PREMIER SCOTT AGAIN

Not content with one statement on this point during the course of his Outlook speech, Premier Scott considered the principle he had enunciated so fundamental and so generally accepted, that he made it the basis of another argument. Desiring to demonstrate that the land question had no place in provincial politics he went so far as to say: Why, it has no more place as a provincial issue than a tariff schedule! On this point his words are as follows:

Parliament's power to enact the Saskatchewan Act was as complete as its authority to elect the Customs Act AND THE LAND BARGAIN HAS NO MORE PLACE AS AN ISSUE IN OUR PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS THAN ANY TARIFF SCHEDULE.

No one disputed Premier Scott's argument as to the irrelevancy of the tariff as a provincial issue; for it was too obvious. What, then, was a sound principle in 1910, must be equally sound in 1912.

SIR LORIMER GOUIN

Sir Lorimer Gouin, the Liberal Premier of Quebec, recognized that the tariff, and particularly reciprocity, was not a legitimate issue in a provincial campaign and he went out of his way to make this clear. Speaking in Montreal during the recent provincial campaign, he said:

Several of the Conservative speakers may lead you to suppose that the Liberals want this to be a federal contest. I want it to be understood that we do not wish to be judged except on the merits of our own acts. They talk of reciprocity. That question, I say most categorically, has nothing to do with the issue which will be decided on May 15.

Here, then, is an example of two Liberal provincial premiers declaring at an interval of two years that the tariff is not a legitimate issue in provincial politics. In one case the opinion was given before reciprocity had become a live federal issue; the other was given after it had been the chief issue in a decisive federal campaign. Out of the mouths of Liberal leaders themselves, then, reciprocity cannot be considered an issue in a provincial election.

THE REASON WHY

It is hardly necessary to advance arguments to show that reciprocity has no place in the present provincial campaign. Suffice it to say that a government when it goes to the country must be judged on its record. The record of the Scott Government is one of a provincial character. Whatever may have been the good or bad features of the Laurier administration, the Scott Government cannot be praised or censured for them. Imagine a mayor, or aldermen in one of our cities standing before the electors and asking that he be returned to office, not because he had advocated certain measures which had been of benefit to the community, but because he had been, and still was, an advocate of reciprocity! In the language of Premier Scott—what would be thought of him? But the plea of such a candidate would be no more absurd than is the plea of the Scott Government today for support on the abstract question of reciprocity.

Aside from this phase of the subject, reciprocity cannot now be considered a live issue, even in federal politics; for the people have decided upon it recently, and in a most decisive manner. Because of this very fact there can be no appeal until considerable time has elapsed.

HUGH GUTHRIE, M. P.

In a speech in the House of Commons Hugh Guthrie, a leading Ontario Liberal M.P., said:

"THIS RECIPROCITY PROPOSAL IS DEAD," etc.
HOWEVER, THAT ISSUE IS OUT OF THE WAY AT

PRESENT, and I think the motion of my right Hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier), the leader of the Opposition, to amend the address is a most pertinent one on this occasion, particularly in view of the personnel of the present cabinet.—page 70, Hansard, session 1911.

HALIFAX CHRONICLE

The Halifax Chronicle, which is the chief organ of the Liberal party in Nova Scotia, expressed the following opinion on reciprocity after the result of the recent federal elections was known:

Reciprocity in any form, as a Canadian public issue, is now finally out of the way, so far as Liberals are concerned. . . . The Liberal party will accept as final the decision of 1911. The Liberal party, we venture without hesitation to assert, will never again take up the question of reciprocity as an important feature of its policy.

THE MONTREAL WITNESS

The Montreal Witness, which is the staunchest free trade and reciprocity journal in Canada, also declares that reciprocity is dead. Commenting on the Taft letter, it says:

In his appeal for support, in Ohio, President Taft shouted to his audience "Reciprocity is dead." President Taft was the chief sponsor for the United States' side of the bargain, which he succeeded in getting Congress to pass only by a supreme effort. As he is held by the people of the chief northern agricultural states guilty of having offered to Canada a bargain that was better for Canadian farmers and worse for themselves than they were willing to agree to; as he has by the offer to Canada lost so much of the grain-growing states as to jeopardize his renomination and to make his re-election impossible; as no other president of the United States will, in view of these facts, in any near future make Canada a better or indeed as good an offer; as Canada would not accept a worse offer, it may be concluded with some certainty that reciprocity has finally been killed by the grain growing states of the north-west, which have in fear of it voted a Cummins, a La Follette, or a Roosevelt, any one to defeat Mr. Taft.

Were there the least hope of the offer of reciprocity standing open, or of another so good offer being made, the Liberal party could with high hope stand by the issue. The other party to the pact has now unfortunately practically withdrawn its offer, and in the words of President Taft, "Reciprocity is dead."

ANOTHER LIBERAL OPINION

The Ottawa Free Press, which is the official Liberal organ at the seat of the federal government, expresses the following opinion:

If the Toronto Globe is to be interpreted as advocating the maintenance of the reciprocity plank in the Liberal platform, the Free Press asserts that it is out of touch with Canadian and Liberal opinion.

The Montreal Herald speaks better for Liberalism when

it says: That this particular proposition for a trade bargain with the United States should be nailed to the masthead by the Liberals is uncalled for by loyalty to any principle, and a grave political mistake will be made if the project is not dropped from the Liberal agenda.

Reciprocity with the United States by agreement is dead in Canada—and dead, we believe, for all time to come.

PRESIDENT TAFT'S LETTER

President Taft, who, because he proposed the reciprocity pact, should be best able to speak of its probable effects, and who certainly knew the intention that was behind it—in writing to Theodore Roosevelt in the early part of 1911, said:

It (reciprocity with Canada) might at first have a tendency to reduce the cost of food products somewhat Meantime the amount of Canadian products we would take would produce a current of business between Western Canada and the United States that **WOULD MAKE CANADA ONLY AN ADJUNCT OF THE UNITED STATES.** It would transfer all their important business **TO CHICAGO AND NEW YORK, WITH THEIR BANK CREDITS AND EVERYTHING ELSE,** and it would increase greatly the demand of Canada for our manufactures. I see this is an argument against reciprocity made in Canada, and I think **IT IS A GOOD ONE.**

ROOSEVELT'S REPLY

In reply ex-President Roosevelt wrote to President Taft as follows:

"It seems to me that **WHAT YOU PROPOSE TO DO WITH CANADA IS ADMIRABLE** from every standpoint. I firmly believe in free trade with Canada for both **ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL REASONS.**

IMPOSSIBLE FOR GENERATIONS

Commenting on the Taft letter, the Brantford Expositor, a leading Liberal paper, edited by Mr. T. H. Preston, a Liberal candidate in the last federal election, says:

It's a dirty bird that fouls its own nest. If Mr. Taft was the creator of the reciprocity proposals, he can hardly find satisfaction in reflecting upon the fact that by his own injudicious conduct he has made any such measure an impossibility for generations to come.

ADJUNCT FEATURE DENOUNCED

The well known Liberal organ, the Ottawa Free Press, commenting on the Taft letter, says:

Canadian respect for United States politicians has received another severe blow by the revelation which Colonel Roosevelt has made as to the true attitude of President Taft on the question of reciprocity between Canada and the United States.

Champ Clark's declaration in favor of reciprocity because it was the first step toward annexation could be disposed of

as the utterance of an irresponsible; President Taft's own reference to reciprocity as the "parting of the ways" could be and was subjected to reasonable explanation.

But now we find that, while President Taft was conducting negotiations with Canada, for a trade reciprocity that should be mutually advantageous, while he was protesting the utmost friendliness for this country, while the agreement had yet to be signed, he wrote a letter to Colonel Roosevelt asking his support of the proposal because it would have the effect of making Canada "ONLY AN ADJUNCT OF THE UNITED STATES."

Here is the full extract from the letter as quoted by Roosevelt:

"It (the reciprocity agreement) might at first have a tendency to reduce the cost of food products somewhat; it would certainly make the reservoir much greater and prevent fluctuations. Meantime the amount of Canadian products we would take would produce a current of business between Western Canada and the United States that would make Canada only an adjunct of the United States. It would transfer all their important business to Chicago and New York, with their bank credits and everything else, and it would increase greatly the demand of Canada for our manufactures. I see this is an argument against reciprocity made in Canada, and I think it is a good one."

In face of that declaration, it is safe to say that Champ Clark knew whereof he spoke when he announced that the annexation of Canada was the basic reason of the proposals made by the United States. The difference between Clark and Taft was only in words. Both seem to have meant the same thing.

It is not necessary to use strong language in characterizing the conduct of President Taft; it speaks for itself.

But Canadians will watch with renewed interest the coming presidential election in the United States, because of their sincere hope that Taft will be "licked out of his boots," either by his own or the other political party.

AMERICAN PAPER DENOUNCES SHAM

Writing on the letter of President Taft to ex-President Roosevelt, the Philadelphia North American says:

It is not surprising that in this cloud of personal and official dust the bigger consequences of the performance should not have been clearly perceived. Time, however, permits the dust to settle, and distance gives the public a better perspective. Looming up out of the scene now is the national humiliation of its chief magistrate advertising to the world that an agreement which he had tried to negotiate with a friendly neighbor nation was designed to cheat that nation.

President Taft's letter about his discredited reciprocity treaty with Canada was marked "confidential." It is a national pity that it was not kept so. For the sake of the reputation of the American character among other nations we wish that it could be suppressed and forgotten.

We would hesitate to give it further publicity even now were it not necessary to make its meaning plain, so that we can the more effectively assure our good friends of Canada

that President Taft in no wise represented the American people in his purpose in that treaty. This is what he says about it in the letter:—

“Meantime the amount of Canadian products we would take would produce a current of business between Western Canada and the United States that would **MAKE CANADA ONLY AN ADJUNCT OF THE UNITED STATES**. It would **TRANSFER ALL THEIR IMPORTANT BUSINESS TO CHICAGO AND NEW YORK**, with their bank credits and everything else, and it would increase greatly the demand of Canada for our manufactures. I see this is an argument against reciprocity made in Canada, and I think it is a good one.

Mr. Taft's bill was only a sham. It was a **SHAM** on the people of this nation as well as those of Canada. While the reciprocity measure was still before Congress the North American denounced it as a false pretense.

At that time we did not know that it was designed to **FLIM-FLAM** our neighbors as well as ourselves. We confess that we thought Canada was getting the better of it. But we did not oppose it on that account. We opposed it because it was clearly shown to have been drawn at the dictation of a few “big interests,” that it would hurt a large part of the American people and that it would help none except those secret forces which had been called to the White House to help frame the bill.

However, as the debate in Congress developed the real character of the Taft measure, we denounced it for a **SHAM** on the American public. It was shown to have been drawn after conferences representing the trusts to be benefited. These comprized the packing trust, the oil trust, the flour trust, certain railroads, the brewing interests and the lumber trust. Although the first argument offered in favor of the Taft measure was the high cost of living, President Taft himself afterwards admitted that it would **NOT** reduce the price of food to the consumer.

It gave cheaper raw material to the flour trust, the beef trust and others at the expense of the American producer. It kept up the tariff wall against the manufactured product that the consumer uses, thus enabling the beef trust and the flour trust and the others to charge their same old high prices and pocket the profits, and even to increase the price in some instances.

We pointed all this out. We denounced the Taft measure as a cheat upon our people. It remained for Mr. Taft to let the world know that it was **ALSO** intended to be a **SWINDLE** on our neighbors! The same forces that framed this measure to squeeze the American public designed it also to **ROB** the Canadians under the guise of friendship, and to **TRANSFER** their bank credits to New York and Chicago.

Let no one be deceived by the Scott press, or Scott partizans. Reciprocity cannot be a legitimate issue in this campaign. It is a subterfuge designed to detract public attention from the government's record, which has utterly discredited Premier Scott and his colleagues in the eyes of the electorate.

